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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9633

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: HOA HAO PLACE THIRTEEN IN LOWER HOUSE

1. IN THE NINE DELTA PROVICNES WHERE THE HOA HAO HAVE SOME DEGREE OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE THERE ARE 23 LOWER HOUSE SEATS. BY OUR ROUGH CALCULATION THERE WERE SOME 69 HOA HAO COMPETING FOR THESE SEATS. THIRTEEN WERE WINNERS:

(1)

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A. KIEN TUONG - LE MINH CHIEU

B. CHAU DOC - VO QUANG VINH, NGUYEN HUU TRINH, - HUYNH VAN LAU (CA DEPUTY)

C. CHUONG THIEN - DANG VAN CONG (CA DEPUTY)

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D. BA CEC - HUYNH THANH DAT

E. AN GIANG - TRAN THI HOA, DOAN VAN CUONG, NGUYEN VAN HUE

F. PHONG DINH - PHAM VAN HOI

G. VINH LONG - BUI VAN NHAN, PHAM VAN LOI

H. KIEN PHONG - NGUYEN VAN THO (ICA DEPUTY)

2. TWO OTHER WINNERS, DOCTOR NGO VAN HIEU OF PHONG DINH AND DOCTOR MA XAI OF AN GIANG, WERE DISPOSED BY THE HOA HAO AND THEMSELVES CLAIM TO BE MEMBERS OF THE SEC.

3. A RUNNER 9633 C O N F I D E N T I A L
ALTHOUGH MA XAI MAKES A CLAIM TO BE HOA HAO AND HAS HAO SUPPORT, INCLUDING ELEMENTS OF THE SAIGON HOA HAO LEAD SHIP, SAY HE IS CATHOLIC; HE IS PROBABLY NOT MUCH OF EITHER. DOCTOR HIEU HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE HOA HAO BUT, LIKE MA XAI, HE IS NOT BELIEVED TO BE A DEVOUT FOLLOWER OF THE RELIGION.

4. LARGE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES VYING FOR LIMITED NUMBER OF SEATS REFLECTS CURRENT DISUNITY WITHIN HOA HAO RANKS. THE HOA HAO CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS RIVEN BY DEEP INTERNAL SPLITS. HOA HAO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY LED BY PHAN BA CAM WITHDREW FROM THE RACE (ALTHOUGH ONE OR TWO SDP CANDIDATES ASSOCIATED WITH TRINH QUOC KHANH STAYED IN AND AT LEAST ONE OF THESE, VO QUANG VINH OF CHAU DOC, WON. THO ALSO WON IN KIEN PHONG WITH SOME SDP SUPPORT). DECISION TO BACK ONE OR THE OTHER CANDIDATE WAS THUS LEFT TO LOCAL HOA HAO COMMITTEES WITHIN WHOSE RANKS THESE SAME DIVISIONS (PLUS LOCAL ANIMOSITIES) ARE REFLECTED. BECAUSE OF THIS DISUNITY, NO HOA HAO-BACKED UPPER HOUSE SEATS WON. IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT ONE LOWER HOUSE SEAT IN CHAU DOC AND ONE IN AN GIANG, AND PERHAPS ALSO SEATS

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IN CA TAU AND TINH LONG, WERE FORFEITED BY HOA HAO FOR
THAT SAME REASON.

SO THAT ID WINNERS IN NO WAY CONSTITUTE A BLOC, EXCEPT
PERHAPS ON THOSE ISSUES DIRECTLY AFFECTING HOA HAO
INTERESTS AS A GROUP. FACTIONAL ALIGNMENT (INSOFAR AS WE
CAN DETERMINE IT) IS AS FOLLOWS:

VO DUANG KINH, CHAU DOC, IS ASSOCIATED WITH TRANH
QUOC HUAN FACTION OF HOA HAO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.
TRINH HOEU ORIGINALLY TAPPED SUP CANDIDATE IN CHAU DOC,
BUT WITHDREW AFTER ARREST OF SUP'S CAMPAIGN MANAGER PHAN BA
CAP, THUS LEAVING KINH SOLE BENEFICIARY OF LDP SUPPORT
IN CHAU DOC. NGUYEN HUU TRANH AND HUYNH VAN LAU,
CHAU DOC, HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH LUONG TRUNG TUONG
HOA HAO CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FACTION. DANG
VAN CHUNG, CHUONG THIEN, HAD SUPPORT OF FORMER HOA HAO
MILITARY OFFICERS WHO DOMINATE MUCH OF CHUONG THIEN'S
PROVINCE ADMINISTRATION. HUYNH TRANH DAT, BA DEC,
WAS SUPPORTED BY HOA HAO CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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MEMBER VAN PHU AND THE BA DEC PROVINCIAL HOA HAO
COMMITTEE. MRS. HOA, AN GIANG, SECOND WIFE OF DECEASED
HOA HAO GENERAL BA CUT, WAS LAUDED BY HOA AS VOTE-GETTER,
LAUDED FOR STRENGTH OF 3-STAR SYNDICATE AND HER HUSBAND'S
NAME. LT. COL. CUONG, AN GIANG, WAS SUPPORTED BY SOME
HOA HAO VETERANS AND PROBABLY SPENT CONSIDERABLE MONEY
ON HIS CAMPAIGN. NGUYEN VAN HUE, AN GIANG, RAN AGAINST
STRONG LOCAL OPPOSITION BUT IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF HOA
HAO LEADER LT. COL. TRAN VAN TUOI. PHAM VAN HOY, PHONG
DINH, HAS SUPPORT OF HOA HAO PROVINCE COMMITTEE ALONG
WITH CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER VAN PHU. THIS
ALLIANCE WITH NON-HOA HAO CANDIDATE HIEU SWAYED HIM
IN HIS CHOICE. IN VINH LONG, PHAM VAN LOI RECEIVED OVER
TWO-THIRDS OF HIS VOTES FROM THE PREDOMINANTLY HOA HAO

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DISTRICT OF BINH MINH. BUI VAN NHAN, VINH LONG, WON
REELECTION ON PAC SUPPORT. HE ORGANIZED AS VINH LONG'S
FORMER REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT CHIEF, AND NOT PRIMARILY
BECAUSE HE HAD HOA HAO SUPPORT. NGUYEN VAN THOA, KIEN
PHONG, WAS LOCALLY SUPPORTED BY LOCAL SDC WHICH IS
POWERFUL IN KIEN PHONG.

PAGE A RUEHJR 9633 C O N F I D E N T I A L
[illegible] THIS DISUNITY PERSISTS, HHOA HAO DEPUTIES MAY
FIND IT DIFFICULT TO COOPERATE ON THE FLOOR OF THE
LOWER HOUSE. TENDENCY WILL BE FOR THEM AS IN THE PAST
TO RALLY ON MOST ISSUES, BUT OPPORTUNITY AND TEMP-
[illegible] COMBINE WITH OTHER ELEMENTS ON SPECIFIC
ISSUES TO TAKE POSITIONS WHICH MAY NOT GAIN GVN BLESS-
ING WILL BE GREATER IN THE LOWER HOUSE THAN IT WAS IN
THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.
BUNKER

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